

# Azathioprine

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## What this medication is used for

Widely used for children and adults with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis.



## How this medication works

Azathioprine impacts the immune system to reduce inflammation.



## How to use this medication

Available as a tablet

-Generally given once daily

-It can take 6 -12 weeks to work. Keep taking your medication.



## Where treatment is administered

Fill your prescription at your pharmacy.



## Special tests done prior to starting

Blood tests may be done prior to starting.



## How long to use this medication

This medication will be used to get your IBD under control and keep it under control long-term. Other medications may be used with Azathioprine.



## Monitoring during treatment

-Regular blood work will be done to monitor for side effects to medication. The frequency of the blood work will be determined by your healthcare team.

-Stool tests, endoscopy and/or other imaging will be done to monitor for response to medication.

- The amount of azathioprine in your blood can be monitored to make sure you are taking enough and not taking too much.



## Side Effects

-Nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain may occur. Take with food to lessen these side effects.

-Temporary hair loss, skin rashes, inflammation of pancreas and liver, and decreased bone marrow function may occur

-Medications that affect the immune system may be associated with developing infections and very rarely cancer.

-For patients with increased risk for skin cancer, exposure to sunlight and UV light should be limited, and patients should wear protective clothing and use a sunscreen with a high protection factor.



## When I should call my doctor

Please call if:

-You want to or have already stopped the medicine

-If you are concerned about any side effects

Other reasons to call your doctor:


-If you have a fever or think you have an infection


-If you become pregnant

-Nausea, vomiting or abdominal pain

## Vaccines



 Live vaccines  
- Not safe

 Inactivated vaccines  
- Safe